



Joint News Release

Boise, Idaho

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Expanded Natural Resources Interim Committee Working Group Sets Meeting For April 21 In Post Falls

(Boise, Idaho – April 15, 2004) - The North Idaho Aquifer Working Group of the Expanded Natural Resources Expanded Interim Committee will meet April 21 in Post Falls, the Committee announced today.

The Working Group will meet at 9:00 a.m. in the first floor conference room of Templin's Resort, 414 East First Avenue, in Post Falls. The meeting is open to the public.

At the meeting the Working Group will select a secretary/scribe for reporting to the full committee, plus hear presentations on ground water issues involving the Rathdrum Prairie and Palouse aquifers.

Eight Idaho legislators make up the Working Group. They are: Rep. Wayne Meyer of Rathdrum, chairman; Sen. Skip Brandt of Kooskia; Sen. Richard "Dick" Compton of Coeur d Alene; Rep. Charles Cuddy of Orofino; Rep. George Eskridge of Dover; Sen. Shawn Keough of Sandpoint; Sen. Joe Stegner of Lewiston; and Sen. Gary Schroeder of Moscow.

The North Idaho Aquifer Working Group has been tasked to:

1. Recommend actions the State should undertake to assist or supplement the efforts of the Palouse Basin Aquifer Committee.
2. Evaluate and make recommendation regarding an administrative structure for ensuring that short-term and long-term Moscow/Pullman Aquifer management goals and objectives are implemented.
3. Study and recommend methods for funding implementation of Moscow/Pullman Aquifer System management goals and objectives.
4. Review the draft ground water management plan for the Rathdrum Prairie and recommend actions the State should take to assist in the drafting and implementation of final water management plan for the aquifer.
5. Evaluate and make recommendations regarding an administrative structure for ensuring that short-term and long-term Rathdrum Aquifer management goals and objectives are implemented.
6. Study and recommend methods for funding implementation of Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer management goals and objectives.
7. Recommend whether an adjudication of the water rights in the Rathdrum Prairie should be pursued; and,
8. Recommend how Washington State and Idaho interests in the aquifer should be addressed.

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The North Idaho Aquifer Working Group is one of five working groups formed by the Idaho Legislature's Natural Resources Interim Committee to deal with water supply and management issues across the State.

Other responsibilities of the Working Group include:

1. Establish benchmarks. The objective is to have a plan of action to define what constitutes success. The working group, along with all working groups, is to review the three components that affect aquifer water levels, i.e., methods for enhancing water supply/recharge; water use efficiencies; and reduction in ground water use. Each area should be reviewed over the course of the year and a recommendation should be made to the Expanded Natural Resources Interim Committee as to what actions should be pursued in each area.
2. Present questions and/or concerns to the Expanded Interim Committee. The Expanded Interim Committee needs to know what state policy issues should be addressed by the main committee and in what order the issues should be addressed. The committee structure is a two-way affair.
3. Immediately begin discussions on goals and objectives for aquifer management.

If you have any questions, please call Mike Nugent at the Legislative Services Office at (208) 334-2475. Future notices, agendas and minutes will be posted on the Idaho Legislature's Internet page at <http://www2.state.id.us/legislat/legislat.html>.

Other working group information is available on the Internet at www.idwr.state.id.us/Committee

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